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Secretariat

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Secretary-General's bulletin

Employment and accessibility for staff members with disabilities in the United Nations Secretariat

The Secretary-General, for the purpose of implementing General Assembly resolutions 61/106 of 13 December 2006, 64/154 of 18 December 2009, 65/186 of 21 December 2010 and 66/229 of 24 December 2011 towards the creation of a non-discriminatory and inclusive working environment for staff members with disabilities at the United Nations Secretariat, promulgates the following:

Section 1
Objectives and scope

1.1 The Organization shall take appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability in the workplace through, inter alia, the adoption of standards and guidelines for the United Nations Secretariat, in order to ensure that staff members with disabilities have access to physical facilities, conferences and services, documentation and information, and professional development. Such measures must be taken within existing resources or with any additional resources approved for this purpose by the General Assembly.

1.2 For the purposes of this bulletin:

(a) "Staff members with disabilities" includes those who have long-term physical and/or mental impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in the work of the Organization on an equal basis with other staff members;

(b) "Discrimination on the basis of disability" means any distinction, exclusion or restriction on the basis of disability which has the purpose or effect of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise of employment-related rights. It includes all forms of discrimination, including the denial of reasonable accommodation;

(c) "Reasonable accommodation" means necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments in the workplace, where needed in a particular case and without imposing a disproportionate or undue burden on the Organization, to allow staff members with disabilities, in all duty stations, to discharge their official functions. Such reasonable accommodation must be made within existing resources or with any additional resources approved for this purpose by the General Assembly.

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Reasonable accommodation may include, for example, adjustment and modification of equipment, modification of job content, working hours, commuting and organization of work for the staff member concerned.

Section 2
Employment of staff members with disabilities

2.1 The Organization is committed, within existing resources or with any additional resources approved for this purpose by the General Assembly, to:

(a) Creating a non-discriminatory and inclusive workplace with non-discriminatory recruitment and employment conditions as well as equal access to continuous learning, professional training opportunities and career advancement;

(b) Taking appropriate measures to ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided to staff members with disabilities, as defined in section 1.2. Reasonable accommodation may include the adjustment of a practice, condition or requirement to take into account the specific needs of a staff member with a disability or disabilities, to enable the staff member to fully participate in the work of the Organization. The accommodation process should be undertaken in consultation with the staff member.

2.2 The staff member concerned shall inform the responsible officials of his or her need for a reasonable accommodation.

Section 3
Accessibility

3.1 Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 65/186, paragraph 15 (d), the Organization is committed to improving accessibility and full inclusion of staff members with disabilities, within existing resources or with any additional resources approved for this purpose by the General Assembly, by:

Physical facilities, conferences and services

(a) Taking appropriate measures to ensure access to and use of premises, facilities and equipment by all staff members with disabilities;

(b) Establishing and implementing provisions, in existing buildings and grounds, for accessible routes, ingress, egress and signage, as well as accessible audio and intuitive wayfinding, including in emergency situations;

Documentation and information

(c) Taking appropriate measures to ensure access to information at the United Nations for staff members with disabilities as needed for the performance of their official functions.

Section 4
Awareness-raising

4.1 The Organization, with a view to fostering a workplace culture and conditions inclusive of persons with disabilities, will undertake periodic dissemination, in accessible formats, of the present bulletin and information relevant to the inclusion

of persons with disabilities in the United Nations workplace, including through raising awareness on disability among staff.

Section 5
Monitoring, coordination and consultation

5.1 The Organization is committed to improving and sharing knowledge and information about good practices on inclusive work environments within the United Nations system, in close consultation with, and with the active involvement of, staff members with disabilities.

5.2 A focal point on disability and accessibility in the workplace will be appointed; the focal point will establish monitoring and compliance mechanisms to ensure, together with the Office of Human Resources Management, the implementation of the present bulletin.

Section 6
Confidentiality of information on disabilities of staff members

6.1 Any information provided by a staff member regarding his/her impairment/s shall remain confidential and shall not be shared unless prior authorization is obtained in writing from the staff member or unless the information is required by a United Nations oversight body or by the United Nations Dispute Tribunal or the United Nations Appeals Tribunal in the course of their official functions.

Section 7
Final provisions

7.1 Following the first two-year period of implementation, the present bulletin will be reviewed and amended as necessary with the involvement of all offices of the United Nations Secretariat, as well as United Nations staff members with disabilities.

7.2 The present bulletin shall enter into force on the date of its issuance.

(*Signed*) **BAN** Ki-moon
Secretary-General